

Anti-Slavery
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Slavery

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The Chief Features of the Present Struggle.

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

CITIZENS OF MONTVILLE, CONN.

DELIVERED IN THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

JULY 4th, 1861,

BY REV. R. BAYARD SNOWDEN.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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A D D R E S S .

THE events which have crowded upon us so thickly in the last few months, have wrought great changes in popular feeling. Not the least of these is found in the contrasted estimates set upon the expression of patriotism formerly and now. It is not long since "Union-saving" was spoken of in contempt; now we are all proud to be engaged in such a work. Fourth of July oratory used to be a thing to be laughed at. Our people have grown sick of listening to florid declamation on the spirit of '76, allusions to the battle fields of the Revolution, extravagant apostrophes to the American Eagle, and exstatic raptures over the Stars and Stripes. "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle" it was thought had been pretty well "played out;" foreign tunes and opera music were usurping the place of the national airs. So long as the peaceful aspect of affairs confined the patriotism of the nation to mere words, it was esteemed of little worth. It got to be a suspicious commodity for a man to deal in. Any one who invested largely in it was held to be, as a matter of course, an unprincipled politician. A Fourth of July Oration was understood to mean a rhetorical compound, made up of national boasting in regard to the past and future, and personal vanity and conceit, in about equal proportions, administered to the audience in a shower of words, which seemed quite brilliant, but really meant nothing.

All this is now changed. The perplexities of the hour have set a premium upon the mere expression of patriotism. While good men slept, the enemy was sowing tares. Suddenly, as from the sown teeth of the dragon, ranks of armed men sprang up to subvert the liberties of the land. Treason was found in the high places of power. The fair temple of

Freedom was cracking and crumbling, and those who kept it, instead of repairing the damage, were breaking down its pillars. A long-preparing, organized conspiracy, showed its hideous head, and assassins were rising up, not in one section only, but on all sides, eager, with greedy weapons, to take the nation's life. The moment was critical. No such thoroughly arranged rebellion had ever before threatened the overthrow of a government, in the whole history of the civilized world. We had no Cicero, to frustrate by anticipation, and indignant eloquence, the secret plots of the American Catalines. And yet, though much of their conduct was concealed from public view; though many of their plans had been long maturing in profound secrecy, there was, withal, a boldness and effrontery in their movements such as are seldom seen in the actions of conspirators. With an unparalleled impudence, which nothing but the contemptible imbecility of the last administration could have furnished ground for, the traitors carried on their iniquitous schemes in the very home of the government, in the Senate Chamber and Hall of Representatives, in the private cabinet of the successor of Washington. Their open threats evinced a strange disregard of publicity. Their deeds of infamy, theft, lying, perjury, every meanness which disgraces the abandoned criminal, perpetrated for long months without a blush by those who had boasted of their chivalry, were the fitting prelude to that daring outrage upon society, which they have since stained their hands with. Just as the betrayer of the world's Savior was a sneaking thief, so, very appropriately, have the traitors to human liberty upon this continent begun their course by a like despicable villany. Fellow citizens, I must be severe upon these enemies of our beloved country. I cannot deal in smooth phrases, nor mincing terms, but must hold them up to that opprobrium of which I feel from my very soul they are worthy. For I cannot forget the history of our nation. My thoughts run back to the early settlement of these States, when our hills and valleys, then a wilderness, were an asylum for the oppressed, when those choice spirits—Puritans and Huguenots—loving home well, but liberty and religion more, crossed stormy seas, and cheerfully faced privations and danger that they might give to their children "freedom to worship God." And the birth-throes of the Republic are fresh in my mind—that stern conflict between principle and despotic British rule. On this 4th of July morning, the Sabbath of the nation, I stand in

imagination in old Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and see those fifty-six determined patriots write in bold characters their immortal names upon the first instrument of our liberties. I track the footsteps of that devoted army in all its varied circumstances of success and discouragement, through those long seven years of warfare. Those hard-fought battle-fields, painful marches, and gloomy winter encampments, perpetually remind me that our freedom was bought with blood and tears. These are memories that cannot be wiped out. And then with peace came the onward march of empire, a rapid growth, sure prosperity, development in manifold resources. We were proud of that lineage by which we could call ourselves Anglo-Saxons; we were proud of those liberal institutions, that enlightened and free Christianity which gleamed over the Atlantic's waves like a star of Hope leading the down-trodden, but brave hearted poor of Europe to seek a home among our growing States; we were proud of our rich and widely-extended territory—a country washed by two oceans, enjoying unbounded wealth of soil and every variety of climate, nursed in the lap of peace, while savage wars tore all Europe in pieces—a young country, yet oh! how we gloried to think, old in deeds, its commerce whitening every sea, its enterprise rousing from the dream of ages old nationalities and stimulating them to action, its Christian heralds holding the Cross aloft amongst the heathen myriads of the Orient, and winning from barbarism to civilization and religion the islands of the great Pacific. These things I cannot forget. Europeans have charged us with immoderate national vanity, but it was asking too much of us that we should not feel the glow of thankful pride when we thought how distinguished a place God had given us in all that has set the Nineteenth Century ahead of the ages of the past.

And looking at what has been done as only the promise of what, under the blessing of God, we might do, I have delighted to picture the future of our country; studying first its physical aspects, looking at the gradual rise of its land from the low Atlantic coast to the Rocky Mountains, whose peaks are covered with everlasting snows, with the great valley of the Mississippi between—the garden spot of the world; tracing the line of possession again from the pine forests of Maine through the long range of Gulf States to the far shores of California. I have thought of the resources of this vast territory—nearly equal in area to the whole of Eu-

rope—its wealth in minerals, its richness of soil, its natural means of intercommunication, its varied and picturesque scenery and exhilarating climate, in a word, its capacity to support an immense population—hundreds of millions—and to throw around them all abundant materials of happiness. And then in imagination I have filled up these boundless States with this teeming population, overleaping mountain barriers and thronging the wildest recesses, and have conceived of the result—great marts of trade built up, such as the world has never yet seen, their streets and squares adorned with marble palaces and halls of science and of art, out-ying in splendor even the gorgeous dreams of oriental fancy; a commerce which shall crowd even the Golden Gate of San Francisco, on the distant Pacific, with a merchant fleet greater than all those united which fill a dozen of the largest ports in the world to-day; the far separated sections of this vast empire bound into near intercourse by the instrumentalities of scientific invention; and throughout its every border the abounding signs of industrious life.

And taking into account the great mixture of races, the mingling in the veins of the nation's life of the blood of all peoples—the strength of the world—I have hoped to see as the out-growth of this, the formation of a superior national character, a character in which strength, firmness, indomitable energy, intelligence, devotion to liberty, reverence for the right, love of eternal truth, should be the prevailing and deep-rooted elements. I have believed that this people, when it should have thus grown into giant power, and seated itself firmly in the center of this American continent, would take the lofty principles relating to free government, and all human rights, civil and religious, and so hold them up before the world, that our beloved American Republic would herself rise up in the might of a moral majesty, and shine out over the Atlantic on one side towards Europe, on the Pacific on the other towards the Orient, a Light unto the nations, a guiding Star of Progress for the world. In this grand national autumn, I felt hopeful there would be harvested the abundant fruit of a pure Christianity.

Such, I think I may say, were the hopes of us all. Shall we then, speak in gentle tones, and not with the deep-mouthed execration of indignant patriotism, of the ruthless deeds of those traitors to their country and humanity who would forever shut out the prospect of this glorious and world-wide triumph? And for what? I blush for their

manhood. I tremble for their souls when I say it—for slavery! Shades of Washington and Franklin, of Jefferson and the Adamses! own them not for countrymen! Though British manufacturers and French tyrants may patronise them, which they will not, yet the time shall certainly come when the moral sense of the human race will consign them to an ocean of infamy, as deep as hell! And in what respect for slavery? Not because we have refused them the continuance within their own States of the dear, divine, blessed institution; not because we have presumed authoritatively to dictate how their slaves shall be treated; not because we have attempted to interfere in any way but by earnest expostulation with their delightful privilege of selling human flesh upon the auction block; of tearing asunder the ties of family; of breaking down, as far as the colored race is concerned, the marriage relation, and forcing four millions of people into a hateful adultery; not because we have demanded, through Congressional legislation, redress for multiplied cases of outrage, committed by them upon free white American citizens, for we have let them go on hanging, and tarring and feathering, until it has come to be a business in which they are most expert, unless perhaps, we except their art of running away, even before an enemy has made his appearance; in a word, not because we have in the slightest degree by popular action sought to meddle with this patriarchal and most benignant institution, in the States where it exists, or asserted any right constitutionally to do so. But, on the other hand, because we have presumed to think for ourselves, because, having our opinion, we have dared to utter it; because, believing slavery to be an evil, a wrong, both a great crime against humanity, and a great blunder in political economy,—believing thus, we have been bold to say so, and because, holding the conscientious conviction that in such a country as this, above all others, consecrated to liberty by the blood of the patriot fathers of the Revolution, Freedom and not Slavery should be national, Slavery and not Freedom should be sectional, we have demanded it as due to the sacred memories of the past, to our present position as a people, and to the coming generations who shall fill up this continent, that Slavery shall have no further extent. Not content with muzzling the press and the mouth of the people among themselves, and with establishing a reign of terror which should create an apparent unanimity in favor of their system of oppression, these model gentlemen have been

unwilling to allow the free millions of the North to give utterance to anti-slavery sentiment; have tried to hold the lash over them, and dragoon them into silence, seeming to tremble under the decisions of the Northern conscience. And from the mere lust of power, they have tried hard to fasten upon the virgin States of the West this accursed system, against which Southern men themselves have rolled up a mountain of testimony.

They have in all this, assumed the attitude of bold defiance to the moral sentiment of civilized society. There have been insurrections for freedom, there have been rebellions against tyranny, but it is a new thing in the history of man upon this earth, to have several millions of people break away from the protection of a liberal government, and rush into the uncertain arena of war in behalf of slavery, laying as the corner stone of their new political structure, the claim to hold fellow-men in life-long and hereditary servitude. And this in the Nineteenth Century! It is impossible to conceal the fact that the hidden spring of this strange and unhappy contest is the slavery question. It is at the bottom of the mischief, and has been working towards the present issue for many long years past. Other causes have co-operated with it, as, for instance, disappointed ambition on the part of the secession leaders; but the great overshadowing difficulty is the question of African Slavery. It is useless to try to conceal this fact; we cannot blink it, and the sooner we come as a people to acknowledge it the better. The only lasting remedy will be a removal of the cause. I am no abolitionist in the radical sense. I should be loth to see the matter of emancipation treated with thoughtless haste, and not in the exercise of a wise, calm, deliberate prudence. But I am bold to say, that I do not believe we shall be able to effect a permanent peace, or maintain a happy Union, until measures for the final extinction of Slavery shall have been devised and set in operation. In the same year that the *May Flower* touched Plymouth Rock, a cargo of wild negroes from Africa was landed from a Dutch vessel at Jamestown, and sold to the planters. And during the two hundred and forty-one years which have elapsed since then, two civilizations, the one centralizing the idea of freedom in thought and action, the other hugging the old worn-out notion of caste, have been growing up side by side in our young Empire, until at last they have met in the fierce shock of conflict for life or death. This is the struggle which is upon us.

It is, most truly, a second war for Freedom. All that our fathers fought to gain, we must fight to hold. It is here that the matter of allegiance to government comes in. It is not a mere question of obedience to established law in the abstract, that is now before the world. Suppose our positions reversed. Imagine the preponderance in population, wealth, commerce, manufactures, all external circumstances, were as much in favor of the Slave States, as it is actually on the side of the Free States. And conceive of the latter, after long years of earnest effort in behalf of liberal principles, willing no longer to be forced into complicity with Slavery, breaking away at last from union with Slave States, as the only hope of securing and extending the institutions of freedom. In such a secession, the sympathies of the whole world would go with them; for it makes a universe of difference whether the object be to forge chains, or advance free-thought. Long enough has the race been groping in darkness and barbarism, now it is trying to get into the light, and every decided step towards Christian liberty must be hailed with joy. Our fathers, throwing off the yoke of English government, at first called rebels, stand forth before the world as honored patriots, because they fought for freedom; while the hot spirits who in this present have cut loose from American government, now called rebels, will, must, forever stand forth as execrated traitors, (would I might say *executed* traitors) because they fight *against* freedom. This essential principle makes their treason against government a treason also against humanity and against God!

One of the most remarkable things connected with this rebellion, is the absence of any plain and forcible reason for its existence. We of the North were very slow to believe that there would be any actual collision with the government, because there seemed to be no sufficient cause why there should be. In contrast with the leaders in other great insurrections, these American rebels have set forth not a single grievance which can give principle or dignity to their struggle. Our revolutionary sires refused to submit to taxation while they were not allowed representation in parliament. The people of the seceding States are able to urge no such complaint. They had an equal voice with us in the legislature of the country. The presidential election, it is true, went against that party to which the most of their voters adhered, but they could not deny the election to be constitutional, and the part of common sense would have been to

hope for a different result the next time. They were led into the steps they took by no overt act of the present administration, for they waited not for it to come into power. The rights of the States had not been infringed by any act of Congress, nor by any arbitrary stretch of power on the part of the executive. There was no more reason why they should desire to secede when they did, than there was thirty, forty, fifty years ago. The true ground for it is found first, as we have seen, in the incompatibility of free and slave institutions, and then, under this, in the ambition of Southern demagogues. It began to be pretty evident that the South was sinking into hopeless inferiority, compared with the North. They had held the reins of government from an early period, but now nineteen millions were found to have more power at the ballot-box than eight millions, though the latter cast votes for four millions of slaves. Well, this was not the crime nor fault of the North, only the misfortune of the South—the inevitable result of that system of bondage which deterred the immigration of free labor, and retarded progress in a thousand ways. Still, these disaffected States had their constitutional rights, and ample representation at the seat of government. It would have been time enough for them to have thought of armed insurrection, with all its uncertainties and horrors, when the North should have used its power to subvert the constitution, and attempt manifest tyranny, and when there should have been no better way open of obtaining redress. But this they would not submit to. They had sucked so long at the maternal breast of the nation, that they were not willing to be weaned, and like a bouncing boy, have set to beating their mother. The great source of trouble with them, as their own Vice President Stephens has confessed, arose from the overweening aspirations of their prominent men. They all wanted to be President, but their country did not seem to be very anxious to obtain their valuable services in this capacity. Next to enjoying the titles and honors of Chief Magistrate, they coveted the substantial power which is exercised by the confidants and public counsellors of weak rulers; and so they were content to have northern doughfaces, without any souls or backbone, sleep in the White House, while they did their will in the administration of the government. But now, even this privilege was taken away. The country had told them that for four years at least, they could stay down on their plantations and look after the “colored population.”

What! cut them off from the milk of their dear mother for four long years, with no means of nourishing their political souls during all that time, but the cold pap of state power! They would not stand it! They would rebel against such cruelty, and set up a government for themselves, in which, though the nutriment might be short, they would at least enjoy it without interference.

And so they went into secession. Well, this is not the first case of secession the world has seen. The ten tribes, with Jereboam at their head, seceded from Judah and Benjamin, and set up two golden calves as the objects of their idolatry. They maintained their national existence for some time, until the king of Babylon came and took them away, and now there is not a person living, philosopher or fool, that can tell what has become of them. The points of resemblance between those old rebels and the new ones are already pretty strong. The Southern seceders have set up their idol too, but as gold is quite a scarce article with them, they made theirs of *cotton*. But it is a huge calf nevertheless. And how did they enter upon this secession? When a man sets up in business, he is generally very anxious to establish at the outset a character for honesty, capacity, and integrity. Character is rightly regarded as not the least valuable part of a man's capital. But these secessionists appear to have regarded this sentiment as too old fashioned for them. They start in an entirely novel manner. They begin with treason, acknowledged by all nations as the blackest crime. Still holding office under the government and drawing pay, they secretly plot its overthrow. This is in violation of sacred oaths. Thus perjury, accounted even by the ancient heathen an infamous offense, is made the second article in their moral capital. Next comes underhand theft, just that kind of vileness which the burglar commits who breaks into your stable at night, and carries off your horse. Along with this, is open robbery on a large scale. But then they anticipated war, and had no money, nor arms, nor cannon and military stores, and was it not right for them to take them? Oh! of course right with American secessionists, because with them wrong is right and right is wrong. Certainly to plunder this vast amount of property, and occupy all the forts they could get hold of, was very proper for them; but then for the government to attempt to regain its possessions is a flagrant outrage—coercion! If a vagabond

comes at night and steals your horse, don't think of forcing him to give it up, for that will be coercing one of the sovereign people. This is the new philosophy. Next is to be added the repudiation of private debts. This young hopeful, just setting up for himself in a new business, and having no cash to spare, but liable to old creditors to a large amount, hits upon the delightful expedient of violating all such obligations. Of course this establishes his character with the mercantile community for shrewdness, if not for honesty. It certainly gives this secession business a very peculiar stamp, that private individuals came North last summer in unusual numbers, and bought goods on credit to a very heavy amount, expecting firmly the very outbreak which has since happened, and now use it as a pretext for repudiating their indebtedness. And then, as the proper climax to all this, is that daring project of preying upon our commerce, by which, according to a custom long ago discarded by Christian nations, they hoped to let loose upon the high seas a horde of piratical plunderers, who should carry out upon the waters the principles of robbery and spoliation begun upon the land.

Well, after stealing millions of money, robbing arsenals, taking possession of United States forts, commissioning pirates, repudiating debts, driving off unoffending citizens, levying war upon the government, which had borne with all their misdeeds till forbearance looked like imbecility, and finally, after daring to open the fire of their batteries upon that dear old flag, under which in the dark days of the Revolution the son of the Puritan and the son of the Cavalier, the Northerner and the Southerner had fought side by side, which was flung out gaily to the breeze when Yorktown surrendered, and freedom was won, which wrapped the body of the dying Lawrence while he cried, "Don't give up the ship!" which floated over the city of the Montezumas, and which, during the whole history of the Republic has been carried to the remotest quarters of the earth, and every where and at all times has commanded the respect of the nations, after filling up the black catalogue of crime by dishonoring this emblem of our country's power and worth, what is the voice coming oftenest from this crew of public plunderers? "All we ask is to be *let alone*." Indeed! very natural! just what the thief always desires; and doubtless these are not the first miscreants who have become so hardened in guilt as to think it very cruel to call them to strict account for their

evil deeds. This is exactly what the sinner wants—to be let alone, to go on in his iniquity untroubled and unpunished; the old devil himself—the first secessionist—when he failed to conquer and was driven out of heaven, no doubt longed to be let alone; but the Almighty put him in a very hot place, with company to suit. The picture of these guilty rebels, perpetrators of so much violence and now with their arms full of ill-gotten treasures, crying out, “we are very peaceable, quiet people; all we ask is, Let us alone!” is a picture calculated to excite both our contempt and indignation.

And is there any ground upon which secession can be peacefully allowed to take place? In the first place, the geographical aspect of the country would indicate an impossibility. There is no natural boundary between the North and South. The mountain ranges, and the great Mississippi serve to bind the two sections together instead of separating. The physical features of our land are such as to fit it for one great Empire. Then too, there are questions of property which could never be satisfactorily adjusted. Florida, Louisiana and Texas were purchased by us at a great cost of blood and money. We should not be true to ourselves nor our posterity, were we to allow the key to the Gulf of Mexico and the mouth of the Mississippi to pass into the hands of a foreign power. Keeping in sight merely the question of the rights of property, I hesitate not to say that we should prove ourselves cowards indeed, did we not make up our minds to retain possession of these gateways to power, which belong to us, though it should cost millions of gold, and thousands of men. This is just, and what is just is right. But the matter assumes a graver character still. Once allow the principle of secession, and there is an end not only to our present Union, but to any Union; there is an end to free government in North America; there is a beginning of anarchy; there is a fair opening for military despotism; there is a fine field offered for some bloody conqueror to enter and rush on to a throne of tyranny, through seas of blood. Grant the right of a State to secede at will, and you virtually annihilate our government, and shatter into at least thirty-four, more likely a hundred fragments, that one country which now calls Washington, father. Our glorious Union, perfected at such a heavy price, is not a mere voluntary concubinage of States, to be dissolved at pleasure, but a holy wedlock, an everlasting, deathless bond. On no other principle could there be any permanency in our institutions,

nor stability and dignity in our government. The nature of man necessitates society, society involves government, and government is nothing without obedience. And if government, to maintain an existence must be obeyed, then it plainly must exercise the power to enforce obedience. This reasoning, in which not a flaw can be detected, makes plain the justice of this war as far as the loyal States are concerned. For "the right of violent revolution can exist only in a case in which a government, through neglect to fulfil its proper functions, or otherwise, becomes intolerably oppressive, and in which no possibility remains of reform by regular and peaceful methods."* Our government was not only not oppressive, but the freest in the world, and the disaffected enjoyed the most ample facilities for the peaceful redress of any grievance. But these traitors, as if to prove themselves the most unreasonable of beings, avowedly directing their rebellion against the government as vested in the person of Mr. Lincoln, consummate all their plans, commit their gigantic robberies, while Mr. Lincoln is yet but a private citizen. They can therefore ground their revolt on no oppression, and they do not sincerely allege any intolerable grievance. They have talked a great deal, it is true, but just like their representatives used to talk in Congress, with a great deal of bluster, and very little common sense. A more unprovoked, causeless, wicked assault upon a State has never occurred in the history of man. Therefore, I say, Behold a just and holy war! Therefore I say, the spectacle witnessed last spring of the spontaneous uprising of the free masses of the North to crush this infernal conspiracy, born of hell, was a truly sublime spectacle. War is upon us, forced upon us, and we accept the issue. We all know it might have been prevented, that the whole thing might have been crushed in the egg. Months ago, a small police force, and a few yards of hemp would have put an end to the whole business. But now it has come to war, and we shrink not from the contest. It is not a war of the North upon the South, but a war of the nation against internal foes—just exactly such a war as the Roman Senate waged against Cataline and his conspirators, who were annihilated by one stubborn, but decisive battle. It is a time for genuine patriotism, both of words and deeds; it is a time for wives to resign their husbands; it is a time for mothers to give up their sons, and for the

* Resolutions at Gen'l Association of Conn., held at Bridgeport, 1861.

sons to be willing to be given up; it is a time for lovers to break away from their sweethearts, and for sweethearts to tell all recreant lovers that the only path to their affections is through devotion to country.

I say we decline not the issue, and yet we have not rushed into it blindly, with reckless foolhardiness, but with a settled judgment on the character of war. The history of its horrors have been in the minds of our people. Not to go back to the gloom of ancient times, the present century has seen too many battle fields to allow us to appeal to the arbitrament of the sword without due deliberation. The men are still living who were grown up when Napoleon led on his marshalled hosts to victory after victory, reaching a dazzling pinnacle of power and glory, but with a mighty sacrifice of life! Fresh yet on the historian's page, are those terrible battles at Marengo, and Jena, Eylau and Friedland. The student of those times shudders even in the midst of his awakened enthusiasm, as he calls up the scene at Austerlitz,—on that bright and beautiful winter morning, three of the grandest armies Europe ever saw, each commanded by an emperor, meeting in the shock of battle—two against one—with Napoleon the victor. I say he shudders, for he reads that after the battle, when the Austrians and Russians were retreating over a frozen lake, the emperor came riding up at full speed, shouting to the artillery, “You are losing time; fire upon those masses; they must be engulfed: fire upon the *ice!*” The ice was broken up, and 20,000 of the enemy sank beneath the waters of the lake. And it is not yet fifty years since the same remorseless conqueror gathered that half million of men, unequalled in all time for numbers, discipline, and equipment, and marched them into the heart of Russia. “We are setting out for Moscow, but we shall soon return,” cried the gay and chivalrous youth, as they parted from their friends; but all that vast army, save a miserable remnant, slept under Russian snows that winter. Waterloo is not forgotten, and that last charge of the National Guard, Napoleon's reserve. On they went with the energy of desperation, but the raking fire of the British battery sweeps them down like the mown grass; on they rush, pressing ever forward with eagerness, but regiment after regiment is cut down to a man; not an inch of ground is gained, though they keep coming on, and soon before them rises a mountain of their own dead! Such is war. But it is

more even than this; it is the devastation of fertile lands; it is the plundering and burning of wealthy and beautiful cities; it is the destruction of a vast amount of property; it is the squandering of many national resources; it is the breaking up of business; it is the demoralization of society; and more than all, it is the blight and ruin of families. The sacrifice of life is great, but the sacrifice of affection is greater. The wreath of the conqueror drops blood—the blood of innocent hearts; under the wheels of his triumphal car are crushed the widow and the orphan, the broken-hearted mother, and the despairing friend. Homes once happy, are forever wrapped in gloom. The “death-shots falling thick and fast” strike down many a brave fellow, but reach hearts far away as well, and cause wounds which time never heals. To die is at all times solemn, but oh! what a place to die—on the battle-field, amidst the roar of artillery, the charge of infantry and cavalry, the bitter curses, horrid oaths, imprecations, blasphemies that arise from hearts inflamed with hellish hate, the poor, dying soldier, trampled down often by the on-rushing ranks. Here is none of the hushed stillness, that is wont to settle about the death-bed of the peaceful citizen, here are no kind attentions of weeping friends, and last words of counsel, and the thrilling pressure of the hand, and the last look of love. Few even of the world’s ambitious conquerors, when declining day has brought them victory, have been able that night to go over the field of their triumph, and pass among the dead and wounded, hear the groans and see the sufferings they have caused, without some pity touching their hearts, rough men of battle, as they are. With what an eye must the good God look down upon such a scene!

Well, all this we have carefully weighed; and with all its horrors in view, we are yet ready for war. For in the present condition of the world, as human nature is yet constituted, it must be used as a last resort for the preservation of States. The tendency of Christianity, while still tolerating it, is to mitigate its evils. And in the fact that, although war is of so dreadful a nature, we are yet willing to encounter it, is found that which was sublime in the unanimous voice of the people in support of the government in April last. For then patriotism rose above party, the welfare of the nation above individual advantage, the enduring good of the future, above the self-interest of the moment. No man living can definitely foretell that which is coming upon

us. We know the past, we can trace the causes of the present, but the future is hid from our eyes. We have had fifty years of peace, and are now in the midst of war; exactly how it will end, we know not, but we have seen enough to feel certain that the Republic will live. War is bad enough, but many things would have been worse. It would have been worse to have tamely surrendered the national capital into the hands of the traitors; it would have been worse to have permitted an armed body of conspirators to overthrow a rightful and benignant government; it would have been infinitely worse for the free masses of the American Republic to have let go to shipwreck every principle for which our fathers contended so long, every right dear to the heart of the race. This continent of ours has long been pointed to by discerning minds as the theater of some great contest. Some have thought it would be of a religious complexion—a grand struggle possibly between Catholicism and Protestantism. I am inclined to think the world has seen the last religious war. But that the United States were to furnish a battlefield of some kind, there have been many reasons for believing. Perhaps it has come upon us, perhaps this is the last, the decisive struggle, the death-grapple between freedom and despotism. Fellow citizens, upon us rests a weighty responsibility. What shall be the condition and prospects of the untold millions who are to fill up the vast area of our country, rests with us to say. It is now to be decided whether we shall bequeath to them the civilization of Freedom, or the barbarism of Slavery; Christian liberty, or despotic bigotry. How then, can any man, in the present hour, talk of compromises? The day for such things has gone. The last moment when the already indignant people of the Union could have listened to any thing of the kind—passed when the rebel batteries opened fire on the flag of Sumpter. There is now no retreat for them or us; and we must fight, unless we are arrant cowards, to the bitter end. Having refused all offers of conciliation, being convicted of open assault upon the life of the nation, the adversaries of the government must be now brought to those terms which an outraged people shall impose. You cannot patch up the crack in the Union by any compromise; the only thing which can fill up the gap and be a lasting cement, is the dead bodies of the traitors. You might as well put on so much “Spalding’s glue,” as to apply another compromise. “Oh! but we want peace,” cry some; “this war

is bad business ; trade is broken up, let us have peace again, and it will be revived." But what will it avail to stop short at this time, if we are to have another war in five or ten years, as we certainly shall, unless we fight it through now. We are in for it, things have been coming to this point for a long time back, and let us now make clean work of it and finish up the job in a workmanlike manner. Do not fear that it will reach on to a war of extermination. In the first place, while we have a united North, there is a divided South ; and though the traitors be annihilated, every man of them, there will be enough friends of the Union left for seed. But it will never come even to this sad issue. The nation is yet unborn that suffered itself to be utterly exterminated, rather than yield to a stronger power. Our Southern chivalry very likely are brave, though we should be disposed to give them more credit in regard to this, if they did not boast so much, and were not so partial to skulking among woods and behind masked batteries ; but the gallant Poles were also brave—a nation of soldiers—and yet submitted to a foreign dominion long before any thing like extermination ; the Hungarians were brave, and yet we ourselves have seen how quickly a few reverses tamed their spirit. And yet these people formed distinct nationalities, and were fighting for liberty—their homes and fire-sides—against foreign aggression. Are we then to expect that these Southern States, contending for no great idea, not the shadow of a principle, and led on by mere political, aspiring demagogues, against their *own* government, not an alien power, are to stand out in their resistance to the point of annihilation ? Human nature is the same the world over, and, guided by the light of history, when the conduct of large masses is under consideration, we can tell with great exactness what they will do in given circumstances.

We must then look at this whole matter from no low point of view. Business may suffer, manufacturing may stop, trade may be dull, great expenses may be incurred, families may be bereaved ; but we are living in heroic times, already liberty has claimed her martyrs, and sacrifices, even the greatest, should be cheerfully borne. We must carry on the contest with no vindictive spirit, but with a firm determination to secure the triumph of right. Let us oppose the savage warfare of our enemies with courage, mingled with Christian moderation. Though they may persist in employing all the treachery and cruelty of the sons of the tomahawk, it is for us

to use towards them the forbearance of Christians. And we are to rise above the little things of the hour ; remembering our own indebtedness to the heroism of past ages, calling to mind the glorious instances of self-sacrifice, which keep green the memory of by-gone centuries, we are to do and dare whatever the perpetuity of the Republic and the sacred cause of Liberty throughout the world demand. There is that in the struggle which should fill us with righteous indignation, and there are hopes awakened which should inspire us with resistless enthusiasm. The destiny of unborn millions, the prosperity of a newly started empire, the whole future of Freedom, hang on the issue before us. Submit to secession, and the Republic is in ruins, the experiment of popular government a failure, Slavery has her foot on the neck of Liberty, the slave trade is re-opened without a blush, a free press is no more, free speech no longer, no government is to be obeyed when the ring-leaders of insurrection find themselves strong enough to cast it down ; the expanding powers of a liberal Christianity are to be dried up to the old rotten husk of bigotry and intolerance. But bring treason to its merited punishment, break up rebellion, crush out secession, and we open before us a gate-way to progress, through which coming millions shall press gladly and gratefully. The hardships of the first settlers, the names and holy deeds of our revolutionary sires, the labors of those statesmen who are now no more, the government which has been our boast and protection, the well-being of the present generation, the hopes of generations yet to come, the lovers of liberty all over the earth, the interests of Christ's church in all the future, and the voice of a God reigning in righteousness,—these all unitedly plead with us to maintain the position we have taken, and, speaking in the might of invincible truth, promise unto us an enduring triumph.

